POPULATION
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Newlyweds — neglected by family planning education

"NEWLYWEDS MAKE UP one of the most neglected, yet most important, of all audiences" for family planning messages, according to a study released by the UNFPA Technical and Evaluation Division.

The benefits of family planning for newlyweds and couples about to be married are varied, ranging from financial security to better mother and child, and reproductive, health, according to the *Review and Analysis of Premarital Newlywed Education Activities in Mexico, Indonesia and the Philippines*. Yet, few country programmes have designed approaches to meet the family planning education needs of these young couples, the study notes.

This neglect stems in part from social pressure on newlyweds to have their first child as soon as possible after marriage, according to the study. Health and family planning professionals may share these attitudes, or may have a bias for postponing family planning education until couples establish their fertility by first having a baby.

Authors Ana Angarita, a specialist in population and women's issues, and O.J. Sikes, Chief of the Education, Communication and Youth Branch of UNFPA's Technical and Evaluation Division, chose to focus on Mexico, Indonesia and the Philippines—countries where family planning education forms part of the civil registration process—for their cultural variety and because of the programmes' presumed potential for replication.

UN/Gayle Jann

A wedding ceremony in Lamaku, Nepal

In all three countries, the study found, the education had greater impact when preceded by an explanation of its importance and benefits for the young couples involved. Impact was measured mainly in terms of subsequent demand for contraception and pre-natal check-ups.

Mexico's autonomous states determine the specifics of their education programmes, not all of which are mandatory. In general, family planning education is provided by judges or registrars of deeds (as mandated by the Population Law), medical or social workers, or personnel from the State Population Councils.

In Indonesia, counselling sessions and courses are specifically tailored for each major religious group, and family planning information is also delivered by non-formal education projects for school drop-outs.

In the Philippines, couples are required to take part in a government-run pre-marriage counselling course, or to receive counselling from a local religious leader. As in Mexico, many couples reportedly seek a local *padrino* who will exempt them from the sessions.

The study lists a "series of factors to be considered" by countries interested in launching similar initiatives. These include: identifying opportunities to provide information during the legal marriage process; finding out how many married couples actually observe the legal process; designing messages relevant to young couples; finding the right people to implement such a programme; and identifying ways to support this work through channels such as schools and mass media.

French and Spanish editions of the Review and Analysis *are currently being prepared. For information or copies, contact: Education, Communication and Youth Branch, Technical and Evaluation Division, UNFPA, 220 East 42nd St., New York, NY 10017, USA. Telephone: (212) 297-5236.*

Youth key to Marshall Islands programme

by Giff Johnson

THE MARSHALL ISLANDS, a low-lying cluster of coral atolls in the mid-Pacific, evoke a tropical paradise. Yet today, rapid population growth is turning the tiny islands into overcrowded urban centres.

Estimates of the number of Marshallese range from 39,000 to 42,000. Though not big by world standards, the population will double in the next 15 years, according to government projections. This growth is being fueled by large-family norms and teen-age pregnancies. Government statistics show that, every year, nearly one in five girls aged 15 to 19 gives birth.

To counteract the population surge, the UNFPA-supported family planning programme has launched innovative projects designed specially for youth. After four years, the initiatives appear to be paying off.

In 1988, one-tenth of the fertile-age population used family planning services, according to national statistics. In 1989, the figure was up to 30 per cent.

"The number of people seeking family planning shows that people are interested in and want family planning," said Janice Alfred, Assistant Secretary for the Government's preventive health services.

But the family planning programme, launched in 1984, had a slow start in this conservative society, said programme Director Darlene Keju-Johnson. "We looked at the statistics then. More than 50 per cent of the population was under 19. So we started the Youth to Youth in Health [group] with the idea of motivating youth."

Every summer since 1986, the Government has sponsored a two-week health seminar for 15-20 young people. They are trained as health educators and motivators, said Jorbi Balos, who initiated the programme. In 1989, two seminars had to be held to meet demand.

After the seminars, youngsters volunteer to assist clinic staff. They create health education posters, songs, skits, and radio and video shows, Balos said.

The youngsters address teen-age pregnancy, cancer, nutrition and contraception. The shows emphasize audience participation and urge people to "take health into their own hands," Balos said.

Although the youth speak mainly to other youth, their message is for the whole community, Balos added. "Parents are really affected by our teen pregnancy skit. They really listen closely."

In addition to the shows, the Youth to Youth programme helps youngsters overcome the embarrassment of seeking family planning counselling, by providing an environment in which youth is actively involved in clinic activities.

Providing information for out-of-school youth, developing a population education curriculum for schools, and teacher training are priorities for UNFPA assistance in the Marshall Islands. Periodic church youth conventions also provide an opportunity to address youngsters in a non-threatening setting where the discussion of family life issues are high on the agenda. (*Depthnews*)

Implant approved

THE UNITED STATES Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on 10 December approved the contraceptive implant NORPLANT ® . This follows 20 years' research and clinical trials in 46 industrialized and developing countries, according to the US-based Population Council, developers of NORPLANT.

Sixteen other countries have approved the implant, including Finland, Indonesia, and Sweden. It is expected to be available in the US beginning in February.

NORPLANT's value is expected to be greatest for women who want long-term contraception without sterilization. A set of matchstick-size tubes implanted under the skin of a woman's upper arm release the hormone progestin for up to five years.

In its statement of approval, the FDA cautioned: "Like contraceptive pills, [NORPLANT] should not be used by women who have acute liver disease, unexplained vaginal bleeding, breast cancer or blood clots in the legs, lungs or eyes."

best copy available

A nightmare for brides, test of virginity is perpetuated by falsehood

MISINFORMATION about family planning is frustrating to programme planners and implementors; but more important is its toll in human distress.

For example, the "virginity test" is an archaic custom founded on and perpetuated by misinformation. Its adherents believe falsely that girls who do not bleed on their wedding night are not virgins. Public humiliation, harassment, and divorce all too often are the result.

Sriani Basnayake, medical director of the Family Planning Association of Sri Lanka, describes the virginity test as an "obnoxious custom."

"There is no way for these innocent girls to prove their chastity, and defend their good name, in a society that attaches such importance to a completely unscientific evaluation," Dr. Basnayake writes in the June 1990 issue of the Family Planning Association of India's *Journal of Family Welfare*. Hence, "the honeymoon night is often not a period of supreme bliss and excitement, but a night which brides await with fear and trepidation, for failure to pass this critical test would spell doom to many innocent young girls, who would sometimes thereafter be harassed by their husbands and in-laws for the rest of their married lives."

Such is the hysteria generated by the dreaded test, Basnayake reports, that "hardly a week passes by without my getting a request for a certificate of virginity." Basnayake has had to examine "dozens of children who have fallen off trees, off bicycles, got entangled in bushes, etc. . . . At times it seems as if any cut or abrasion above the mid-thigh is enough to sound the alarm about possible loss of virginity." Among the examples Basnayake cites is that of a mother who feared her three-year-old daughter had lost her virginity because of a tiny cut on the buttock sustained while playing.

At the centre of this problem is ignorance of the fact that, on average, one in four virgins will not bleed at first coitus because of physiological factors, including variations in the structure of the hymen—the fold of membrane which closes part of the external orifice of the virginal vagina.

Only 56.2 per cent of those interviewed as part of a 1986 survey of reproductive-health knowledge, attitudes, and practices knew the correct definition of a virgin—a girl who has never had sexual intercourse. This, writes Basnayake, even though much importance is attached to preserving one's virginity until marriage. Seventy-six per cent of the men interviewed wanted to marry virgins.

Twenty-four per cent of the total sample—and only 17 per cent of the men interviewed—knew that all women don't bleed at first coitus. Basnayake notes a widespread misconception that the hymen is a thick solid barrier that must be "broken with much force and effort, and should always be accompanied by severe pain and bloodshed." Although 71 per cent had heard of the hymen, only 29.5 per cent knew what it was. Twenty-one per cent of men and 31 per cent of women mistakenly believed that the hymen was a structure that developed only after the onset of first menstruation.

Noting that 46.8 per cent of respondents who had had at least 11 years of schooling knew what the hymen was, Basnayake concludes: "The tradition of preserving one's virginity until the time of marriage is appropriate to our culture. The battle we should wage is against the unfair and unscientific mechanisms adopted to demonstrate this virtue, and the humiliation meted out to brides failing the test. . . . The only way [to do this], though it may take time, is to educate our youth on this subject, so that in time to come, this degrading custom becomes a relic of the past."

The Journal of Family Welfare—Personal, Marital and Sociological *is available from: Family Planning Association of India, Bajaj Bhavan, Nariman Point, Bombay 400 021, India.* □

Family planning's past, future charted

"THERE IS A GENERAL consensus today that family planning should be judged as a human right and health measure and not just for its demographic or economic impact," says a new report.

One result will be that "family planning will be defined, promoted, and practiced in different ways than it has been in the past," the report adds.

"The International Family Planning Movement," by demographers Peter J. Donaldson and Amy Ong Tsui, was released in November as the latest issue of *Population Bulletin* by the United States-based Population Reference Bureau.

Donaldson and Tsui trace the history of family planning from the early 1900s, when world population was less than two billion.

"Since the early 1960s, the number of men and women using contraception has grown more than six-fold to over 400 million of the estimated 850 to 880 million married couples of reproductive age," the authors assert. The result, they say, will be billions fewer people than would otherwise inhabit Earth in the early twenty-first century.

In the 1960s, women in developing countries bore more than six children, on average. By 1990, that figure had fallen to around 3.9, according to Donaldson and Tsui. Today, they write, "sterilization is the most widely used fertility control method in the world." Some 45 per cent of all couples prefer sterilization. IUDs (intrauterine devices) and the pill rank next in acceptance.

In the future, sterilization acceptance will increase, the authors say. New contraceptive methods may become widely available in coming decades, too. These include implants such as NORPLANT®, the controversial drug RU-486, and various contraceptive injections.

Donaldson and Tsui also predict that "family planning services will become fully integrated into government health services," and that "a large proportion of users will receive services from private clinics, hospitals, pharmacies, or from individual physicians working in private practice."

The authors note that international funds for family planning dropped by some US$ 100 million between 1985 and 1988, after adjusting for inflation—just as the demand for services and the number of women of childbearing age were beginning to rise.

"Some developing countries, such as Nigeria, have already experienced occasional shortfalls in contraceptive supplies," the authors warn. "Additional shortfalls are likely as countries fail to obtain sufficient local and international resources to supply contraceptives to all those who need them."

"The International Family Planning Movement" is available from Population Reference Bureau, Inc., 1875 Connecticut Ave, N.W., Suite 520, Washington, D.C. 20009, USA. □

UNFPA/Lily Solmssen

Men await family planning counselling at a clinic in Lahore, Pakistan. Acceptance of sterilization, already the leading contraceptive method, will increase, says a new report.

Entertainment supporting family planning

IN MEXICO audiences laugh at pregnant men in a television soap opera. In Zimbabwe a feature film depicts the unraveling of life for a student who becomes pregnant. A Turkish TV spot shows a man and his six young children posed around the empty chair of the children's mother—a victim of too much childbearing.

The practice of blending education with entertainment is gaining currency in family planning, with impressive results. This, according to "Lights! Camera! Action! Promoting Family Planning with TV, Video, and Film," the latest issue of *Population Reports*, published by the Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health in Baltimore, Maryland.

Evidence that the approach works, according to the Hopkins report, is everywhere in the developing world, where there is one television for every 12 people. For example:

- In Turkey, some 240,000 women began or switched to modern contraceptives after a television campaign featuring comedies, dramas and documentaries.
- In the Philippines, music videos promoting sexual responsibility spurred an estimated 150,000 calls to a young people's telephone hotline.
- In Enugu, Nigeria, a popular TV variety show incorporated a drama series on family planning into its format and TV spots gave the addresses of family planning clinics. Visits to family planning clinics more than doubled, and 45 per cent of clients mentioned the show as their source of referral.

Surveys find that people want family planning information in the broadcast media, the report states. In 19 developing countries an average of 84 per cent of married women surveyed approved of family planning information being transmitted on radio and TV.

The report cautions that mass-media health campaigns can be controversial, expensive and time-consuming. If carefully tailored to specific audiences and "properly done," however, they can reach millions of people cost-effectively. For example, it cost about four US cents per person to reach an estimated six million women in Turkey.

The report, which adds to an earlier study on the role of radio in spreading family planning messages, provides guidelines for programme planning and evaluation. It also lists major sources of technical, financial, and other assistance for, and information on, family planning campaigns using TV, video, and film. Among them are the Japanese Organization for International Co-operation in Family Planning (JOICFP), the United Nations Children's Fund, the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and UNFPA.

For more information, contact: Population Information Program, The Johns Hopkins University, 527 St. Paul Place, Baltimore, MD 21202, USA. Telephone: (301) 659-6300. □

Young essayists confront population issues

STUDENT ESSAYISTS throughout the world commemorated World Population Day by expounding their views on population, environment, and development issues.

A limited sampling of excerpts, arranged by author's age, is given below. The younger writers come from schools in the Caribbean country of Jamaica, the older ones from the only college in Bhutan, in the Himalayas.

These spirited, incisive passages reveal a groundswell of concern over rapid population growth and for Earth itself. They show us what demographers' preoccupations mean to youth, in terms of family life, schooling, ecology, economics and employment.

World Population Day, an annual event, was first observed in some 100 countries on 11 July 1990. An outgrowth of the Day of Five Billion in 1987, it was proclaimed in 1989 by UNFPA's Governing Council in order to focus attention on the urgency and importance of population issues.

[From "The Effects of Overpopulation on Family Life," by Lisa Hay, 12, New Providence Primary School, Jamaica]:

"OVERPOPULATION IN any country can have adverse effects on family life. Therefore, when discussing this topic, the lack of employment, housing, education and the high cost of living should be borne in mind.

"Think of a mother and father having no job and having a family to care for. How sad a situation. Sometimes the little money they accumulate cannot stretch to maintain the family, so they hunger and seek better conditions. These they sometimes attain by breaking away, stealing, or doing odd jobs.

"Some parents migrate to seek a better way of life. This sometimes causes a breakdown in the family relationship, where children are left unprotected, they see themselves unwanted, and so get involved in several problems which lead to abuse sexually and physically.

"In an overcrowded home, space is always limited. The members become confused and frustrated having to be bumping into one another with little or no privacy. If one family member contracts a disease, it is most likely that the entire household will soon be affected due to close contact with each other.

"Fewer children and more work will build a better society and a better family life."

[From "The Effects of Overpopulation on Education," by Dominic White, 12, Belair School, Jamaica]:

"OVERPOPULATION IS not only a problem in Jamaica, but worldwide. We often see on our television screens scenes in India and other countries which are thickly populated, and depict poverty, sickness and distress. We also see that the problem affects every aspect of human life. Below I will try to show the effects it has on education.

"Overpopulation results in overcrowding of the existing schools. As a result of this students have to stand or share facilities which were meant for use by one student only.

"The student-teacher ratio is also affected. Formerly it was one to 25, now it is as high as one to 50 or even more. This results in many students just tagging along.

"Overpopulation often leads to malnutrition for some in the society. Where this exists children cannot learn, because of the lack of proper food.

Ron Giling

Signs of environmental decay are everywhere, including Africa (photo). Environmental concerns were a central theme in students' World Population Day essays worldwide.

"With all these problems facing us in our education system it is time we as a nation make a more serious effort to control the ever-growing population."

[From "Overpopulation in Jamaica: The Problem and its Solutions," by Hope Fisher, 14, Knox College, Jamaica]:

"IN OUR COUNTRY today, there are 2.5 million people. Babies are born daily, mostly of teenage parents but the main problem is that when these young souls are born what awaits them is very serious indeed as they will have little opportunity to enjoy a reasonable standard of living, including proper nutrition, proper schooling, proper health services and other social amenities that make living possible.

"Proper planning of a family is one of the most important factors of reducing population growth. There are many different types of birth control which people should practice, to reduce the birth rate. Health personnel should also use the curriculum to educate students who in turn will educate their parents.

"The disastrous consequences that failure to combine population and development plans portends for the human race and the natural environment can be averted by the proper education of the population, beginning in schools, on the relationship between population growth and economic development and the importance of family planning. Time is a luxury we do not have. Urgent action is required now, to ensure a reasonable quality of life and a stable and secure island for a child born today."

[From "Man Proposes and Globe Disposes," by Chado Tshering, Sherubtse Degree College, Bhutan]:

"WORLD POPULATION stands at 5.3 billion, and every year an additional population equal to that of Eastern Europe is born. The available resources are gradually decreasing to exhaustion, where man will meet a fatal end. As the horticulturalist Luther Bank wrote, 'Nature's laws affirm instead of prohibit. If you violate her laws you are your own prosecuting attorney, judge and jury, and hangman.'

"Out of the five billion people today more than one billion live below the poverty line. They lack even the basic education facilities and are deprived of the knowledge of population control. This is the major cause of the population explosion in the developing countries.

"There was a time when the human population was small, the ecosystem was sound and there was an abundance of resources, both non-renewable and renewable. Today the population has escalated exponentially and the resources are highly pressurized.

"The tremendous growth of industrial civilization during the 19th and 20th centuries has caused a disturbance in the carbon cycle, the sulphur cycle, and the oxygen cycle. The combined effects of the population explosion and industrial growth has brought about deforestation, thus shrinking the forest cover over the world.

"Another serious danger of the century is the depletion of the ozone layer. With the rise of the standard of living, the domestic use of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) has increased enormously over the past two decades.

"The main factor in the disappearance of forests from time immemorial has been the search for new agricultural land. The last great virgin forest, the Amazon basin, is today threatened with annihilation. Many millions of hectares of forests have been cleared in the Himalayas and in the Far East for agricultural purposes.

"It is estimated that by the year 2000, the world's population will be 6 billion or so.

"The best solution for our continued existence and for the Earth to be our home is to reduce or control population growth. The people should at all times be kept informed of population policies. Education among our women folk should be strengthened. The developed countries should remember that the globe can be a good home if only they help the developing countries to check population growth and protect the environment."

[From "Population and Its Environmental Implications," by Lily Wangchuck, Sherubtse Degree College, Bhutan]:

"ALL OTHER CAUSES for the disturbance in the natural ecological balance arise chiefly either as a result of population growth or due to secondary effects of man's encroachment into the natural world. Human population growth poses a serious danger to the environment, and consequently to human society itself. This is visible when the expansion of the human population places inevitable pressure on natural resources and the deterioration of the latter ultimately questions man's mere survival.

"Living has become difficult due to overpopulation, land, water and air pollution, depletion of natural resources, soil erosion, loss of soil fertility, deforestation, and unemployment, along with several other indirect effects. Population growth becomes a menace when it is not planned.

"Populations in rural areas increase due to high death rates, and because children are an economic asset in the struggle to wrest a living from the soil, and where parents are dependent on children for security in their old age. But since many die before reaching a productive age, many more must be born to close the gap. Moreover, birth rates are high in rural areas because of illiteracy, non-availability of family planning, and ignorance.

"Population in urban areas increases due to industrialization. As farms get mechanized fewer hands are required, so people flock into cities for greater opportunity than farm life provides. Industrialization and urbanization have led to severe pollution, inadequate water supply, sewage problems, etc.

"And there are still many more environmental problems caused by population growth, so it should be controlled by spreading education which would make people more aware of the dangers of overpopulation. The minimum age for marriage should be raised to shorten the fertility period, and family planning centres should be established with various clinical facilities."

Ever-expanding Cairo causing "urban crisis" in Egypt

EVERY YEAR, CAIRO encroaches on 1,200 hectares of agricultural land. The city's expansion is "a severe urban crisis, the dimensions of which are being shaped by rapid population growth and limited habitable land," according to a new United Nations report.

The profile of the Egyptian capital is the latest in the series *Population Growth and Policies in Mega-Cities* produced by the Population Division of the UN Department of International Economic and Social Affairs.

Cairo's estimated 10 million inhabitants—nearly one in five Egyptians—live in some of the most cramped conditions in the world. In some neighbourhoods, there are as many as one hundred people to one square metre of land.

Egypt's population is estimated at 52 million. The UN expects the country's population to grow by about six million people by 2000—the National Population Council expects Cairo's population to swell by seven million. Newcomers to the city in the next ten years will include workers returning from other parts of the Middle East, where employment opportunities are dwindling.

Egypt was the first Arab country to adopt a national population policy, in 1963. Contraceptive knowledge is almost universal among Cairo's women, and 48.3 per cent of currently married women use modern contraception. The National Population Council wants to double nation-wide contraceptive prevalence by century's end.

Informal housing mushrooms in a city where conventional housing is scarce. For example, between 250,000 and one million people rent aboveground burial vaults and graveside shelters in the "City of the Dead"—Cairo's ancient cemeteries.

UNICEF/A. Hewett

Children at play among graves in Cairo's "City of the Dead," where between 250,000 and one million people live.

Unemployment in Greater Cairo, home to almost half of Egypt's manufacturing workers, is estimated at about 10 per cent, although as many as one in three Cairenes might be underemployed. Current policy calls for a moratorium on industrial investment in Cairo. If strictly enforced, this policy "raises the spectre of rising rates of unemployment among the metropolitan labour force," the report states.

Access to health care and schooling is considered good. Egypt has one of the best ratios of doctors to population in the developing world, the report states. There are enough hospital beds in Cairo, and overcrowding in hospital out-patient clinics is relieved by a network of government-approved, subsidized Islamic clinics. Some 75 per cent of Cairenes can read and write.

But other public services have fallen behind Cairo's growth. One in five residents has to use canals, wells, and public water fountains for want of piped water. Sanitation is similarly scarce.

Severe traffic congestion, insufficient public transportation, and an acute shortage of parking spaces come with one of the world's lowest provisions of road space per person and the dramatic proliferation of private vehicles. Accident rates are among the highest in the world: 80 fatalities and 600 injuries for every 10,000 vehicles. Underground, lack of funding has staid further expansion of Cairo's nascent metro, which can carry 120,000 passengers per hour.

Looking to the future, the report states that Cairo will have to contend with chronic environmental decay as its older buildings crumble under attack by salt from a rising water table.

The report concludes that "financing urban development in the future is likely to be one of Cairo's—and Egypt's—greatest challenges."

Copies of Population Growth and Policies in Mega-Cities: Cairo (Population Policy Paper No. 34, ST/ESA/SER.R/103), *are available from: Director, Population Division, United Nations, New York, NY 10017, USA. Other reports in this series include: Bangkok, Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi, Dhaka, Jakarta, Karachi, Madras, Metro Manila, and Seoul.* □

Report scores countries on women's rights

WOMEN'S RIGHTS CONTINUE to be ignored or denied in many industrialized and developing countries, according to a report published by the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF).

The report assesses application of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW, or the Women's Convention), which marked its tenth anniversary last year.

Specifically, the report monitors access to family planning services and laws relating to marriage, divorce, maternity protection, and abortion. It explains that maternity protection in employment is used as "an indicator of policy recognition of women's reproductive and productive roles."

Only half a dozen of the 103 UN member states which ratified the Convention by June 1990 are given "excellent" marks for giving women reproductive choices: Cuba, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.

Seventeen countries have signed but failed to ratify the Convention, among them India, Switzerland and the United States.

The report reveals wide variations in application even among countries which have ratified the Convention. In Chile, girls can still legally marry at the age of 12. In Ireland, there are severe restrictions on the availability of contraceptives and divorce is still illegal.

The availability of family planning services is similarly patchy, the report says. Only half of the countries which ratified the Convention give comprehensive coverage, and eight provide no family planning support.

The report states that some countries, such as the Soviet Union and Romania "have ample legislation on equality of the sexes, but a very poor record on sex education or availability of family planning services—though steps are now being taken to remedy this."

"Even where governments support and provide family planning, access to services may be limited, especially in rural areas," the report states. "Everywhere, social, structural and economic realities limit women's choices and their reproductive rights."

The report, "Reproductive Rights: How Signatories to the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women are Measuring Up," appears as a wallchart with IPPF's People *magazine, Vol. 17, No. 4, 1990. For more information, contact: IPPF Distribution Unit, P.O. Box 759, Inner Circle, Regent's Park, London NW1 4LQ, England.* □

NEWS IN BRIEF

BOOKS

• *Sustainable Development: A New Path for Progress*, published by the Washington, D.C.-based Global Tomorrow Coalition is described by its authors as "a kind of primer on sustainable development." For more information, contact: Global Tomorrow Coalition, 1325 G Street, N.W., Suite 915, Washington, D.C. 20005-3104, USA. Telephone: (202) 628-4016. □

• The World Wildlife Fund's new *Atlas of the Environment* assembles information on some 200 issues concerning Earth's environment. Two-page maps are accompanied by explanatory text, feature articles, and definitions of terms such as "desertification." The atlas is available in cloth and paper editions from Prentice Hall Press. □

VISITORS

A GROUP OF Swedish parliamentarians visited UNFPA headquarters on 6 December. Parliamentarians Bertil Mabrink (Communist), Catarina Ronnung, Kristina Svensson, and Ulla-Britt Abark (Social Democrats) were accompanied by Christina Ebbeskog of the Central Organization of Salaried Employees, Ingvar Patzell of the Federation of Swedish Industries and Annika Wiren of the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations. They met with Deputy Executive Director (Programme) Joseph Van Arendonk and other senior staffers. □

Latest staff changes at UNFPA

IN ADDITION TO the changes listed in *Population*, October 1990, the following senior staff re-assignments have occurred at UNFPA:

• Mr. Jyoti Shankar Singh—Chief, Technical and Evaluation Division (10 December 1990)

• Dr. Jose Donayre—Chief, Programme Co-ordination, Management and Field Support Office (10 December 1990)

• Mr. Hirofumi Ando—Chief, Information and External Relations Division (10 December 1990)

• Mr. Jurgen Sacklowski—Special Adviser to the Deputy Executive Director, Policy and Administration (1 December 1990) □

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